

Adopted

Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting October 19, 2015

PRESENT: Joe Constance Selectman
Dwight Lovejoy Selectman
Christine Quirk Selectman portion by phone
Peter Flynn Town Administrator

Road Agent Dick Perusse, Library Trustee Chairman Bill Gould, Police Chief Jim Brace, School Board Member Bill Schmidt, Victor and Amy Parrish and Brandy Mitroff of the public were present.

A. CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Dwight Lovejoy at 6:00PM beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda-The Selectmen signed the consent agenda. Joe moved to approve the consent agenda. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0 The Consent Agenda included the appointment of Daniel Towne as a general laborer for Town Buildings and Dannie Garrity as laborer at the Transfer Station - both are part time positions.

B. PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

C. APPOINTMENTS:

Item 1: William Gould-Library Trustee Chair-Request for Adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding (Continued Discussion): Library Trustee Chairman Bill Gould was present to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the revised Memorandum of Understanding prepared by the library confirming arrangements that have been made between the library and the town for library procedures. The changes were reviewed.

Joe asked if the library could budget for its own salt and sand next year as it is independent from the town per NH RSA. The school is also independent and will be asked to budget for its own salt and sand next year. This is to budget appropriately for each town department instead of all salt and sand used by the town included in the Highway Department budget.

Bill noted the inside of the library is separate and independent from the town but the building and grounds are the towns and it seems odd to budget separately for salt and sand for the parking lot. He is ok with the language of the MOU and understands the town roads are the first priority of the Highway Department.

Road Agent Dick Perusse was also present and noted it is a great idea to have town department's budget for their own salt and sand needs. It was noted that prior to 2010 the library was located

downtown and there was no extra needed for salt, sand, sweeping or striping as none was needed in that location, the library did not have a parking lot. Dick said the library has been very arrogant with expectations of the Highway Department and the Highway Department has done a lot of maintenance at the library parking lot including guardrails. This is added work to be included in the Highway Department budget.

Dwight expressed concern that if someone at the library does the parking lot maintenance they will need a truck to do this. He asked if the new part time maintenance person is going to maintain the library parking lot.

Peter said the new part time maintenance person will not maintain the parking lot; they will shovel the walkway to the door and mow the lawn at the library.

Victor Parrish of Hopkins Road was present and said taxpayers pay for the salt and sand no matter which town department budgets it. He said separate department budgets are a good idea within reason.

Joe said no library formal agreement is in place for parking lot maintenance.

Victor asked if there are any other town areas where non-town employees get town pay and benefits as the library employees do.

Peter noted library salaries are approved at town meeting and library employee accountability is to the library Trustees and the Librarian.

Brandy noted the Trustees are elected.

Dick asked why the MOU is needed.

Joe said the MOU is needed because the library is independent from the town consistent with RSA noted in MOU.

Dick suggested the library set up an account to help with parking lot maintenance costs.

Bill said the purpose of the MOU is to put in writing the way the library has been operating with the town for future reference.

Dwight noted he has observed people doing volunteer maintenance in the library who should have licenses to do this work. He is concerned about this if the town doesn't have a liability policy to cover this if something happens.

Peter said if they are on the payroll they are covered by the town liability insurance.

Joe said the library is not really a town department.

Bill noted the library is owned by the town, not by the Trustees.

Brandy asked why the MOU is needed.

Joe said the MOU is needed because of the legal standing of the library.

Brandy said the library trustees have no standing outside the library. She said the MOU does more than memorialize what is happening and, legally, if it is signed it will be an agreement of what the town will do.

Joe noted the MOU says it can be terminated at any time.

Brandy said the Highway Department should get to the library parking lot maintenance when appropriate and library employees should not call and complain if they don't think the parking lot was maintained in a timely manner.

Joe said this is covered in section 5 of the MOU.

Bill said the MOU is not a contract.

Victor said the purpose of the MOU is to educate the future people involved and that does not require a signature. The signature noted in the MOU seems unnecessary and in his experience any time paperwork is added things can get complicated. Procedure clarification does not require signatures.

Bill noted other towns use an MOU for this and New Boston also thought it was a good idea.

Joe agrees and doesn't think the MOU will complicate things. His maintenance concern is plowing/snow removal. He recommends Bill bring this to the Trustees to prepare for budgeting for the next fiscal year.

Brandy asked Dick if there is a way to evaluate the general amount of salt and sand the Highway Department uses at each town facility such as the library and the school.

Dick said this is possible but the cost of materials changes each year and this factor along with any extra roadway added each year affects the Highway Department budget.

Brandy said if each department budgets for salt and sand their budget will go up and the Highway Department budget for materials should go down. This was done for the Transfer Station in the past and that seemed a little too picky. She noted the communication between the Road Agent and the school needs improvement and if the library treated the Highway Department as their own private snow removal service Peter should address that.

Joe said the town is trying to get clear accounting lines.

Bill asked if citizens would rather know what the Highway Department costs or individual departments when they are looking at budgets,

Joe said that should be brought up with the Finance Committee.

Item 2: Chief James Brace-Request Adoption of New Police Pay Scale and Sick Policy for 2016: Police Chief James Brace was present to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- Dwight asked if the Police Department has noticed an increase in chemical tanker trucks traveling New Boston in the middle of the night. This is occurring on Dwight's road. Jim said this has not been brought up lately and he will let the officers know.
- The Police Department pay scale was discussed. The town is planning a 1.5% COLA increase for town employees this year. Jim has analyzed this for the Police Department and prepared a proposal. This plan is needed as an incentive to retain new quality officers that the town hires periodically and invests money in them to make them competent as officers in New Boston including uniforms and Police Academy training, approximately \$26,500. He is concerned if New Boston's officer salary is not competitive they will get their training here and then move on to a Police Department nearby that pays more. Joe asked what happens when an officer gets to the top of the pay scale and Jim said in that case a longevity bonus is available. Peter noted the 1.5% COLA salary increase is planned for all town employees this year to be used in conjunction with the town step and grade system that is continuous. Jim noted he researched police salaries in surrounding towns this year and found New Boston's salaries to be competitive, but is concerned that if a nearby town decides to increase these with a COLA and grade New Boston will no longer be competitive. He said New Boston's police salaries have to be competitive to keep good officers. Joe moved to adopt the plan as articulated in the meeting backup. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0 (Christine is believed to have dropped the phone line with a bad connection prior to this time.)
- Jim then reviewed the history of the Police Department sick policy, time use and impacts on the Department. In the past the policy was 8 hours of sick time were available per month. During his first 22 months as New Boston's chief, there was an overwhelming amount of sick time used and he requested the policy change to prevent this. The change was made. Jim now proposes to change the Police Department sick policy again now that the problem is under control. Joe said 8 hours sick time per month seems reasonable and is not sure he wants to make this change. Peter said this has always been the policy in municipalities. Jim noted the Police Officers get eleven holidays, personal days, sick time and vacation time. Joe said people do get sick, 8 hours per month is the norm and it may have been the culture of the Department when the problem was occurring. Jim said he is requesting this change to protect the town from this type of abuse. He also noted that if an officer is out sick, that shift has to be covered at time and a half. Sick time is not budgeted. Alternatively, New Boston could put State Police on call at night when sick time is used. During daytime shifts the New Boston Police Department would have to cover it. Victor said it is unusual to get 12 sick days per year. He noted earned time off is also available and it cannot be anticipated if someone is sick but covering a shift can be anticipated when someone requests time off. Jim also noted sick time is a bridge to short term disability. Short and long term disability is offered. He also tried a sick time buyback with the officers to prevent abuse. His current proposal changes available sick time from 4 hours per month to 5 hours per month, equaling one day every other month. The Selectmen will wait for Christine to be available to vote.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

Item 3: Adoption of Public and Non-Public Minutes of October 5, 2015: The Selectmen reviewed the public and non-public minutes of October 5, 2015. Joe moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0

Item 4: YTD Update on Budget Expenditures-2015: Peter reported the status of expenditures. The budget continues to be going well. He is keeping a close eye on large department budgets. He met with the Road Agent and will meet with the Police and Fire Departments to discuss budget status. Peter will have a phone appointment with the NH Department of Revenue Administration to begin the process of setting the tax rate. He will then call an emergency Selectmen's meeting with 24 hour notice to set the final tax rate of 2015.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

None.

F. OTHER BUSINESS:

Item 5: Town Administrator's Report:

- Plowing: As above.
- Today a \$5,000 check was received from NH Charitable Foundation as a grant award the Foot Traffic Safety Committee applied for. A \$25,000 donation is also anticipated. These will need formal Selectmen acceptance at an upcoming meeting. Peter and Dwight signed a grant application for a \$15,000 grant to be sent tomorrow. Sandi VanScoyoc is working on the grant applications and doing a great job. The Committee will meet with the Selectmen at their next meeting with a list of donations. The Committee may now be investigating more types of footbridges as not all Committee members are in agreement with what was chosen at their September meeting.

Item 6: Selectmen's Reports:

Joe reported the Planning Board is making good progress on the Master Plan. Joe attended the first Fire Station Design meeting Friday night as the Selectmen representative on this committee. Peter reported Christine attended and would have reported on the recent CIP meetings if she was here tonight. At the first meeting the CIP Committee discussed Transfer Station and Selectmen requests and the CIP Committee accepted those schedules. The Highway Department also presented and moved the sand and salt shed on the schedule. At the second meeting the Fire Department and the School District met with the CIP Committee. The Fire Department was requested to return to the CIP Committee with more information on the new Fire Station that is expected to cost \$2.6 million and the school moved its addition on the schedule.

Public Forum:

Victor Parrish of Hopkins Road read aloud a request and gave it to the Selectmen in writing that he would like to request the Selectmen under RSA91a to task the library with researching statistics on use of the Whipple Free Library. Joe recommended the request be amended according to online databases. He noted the library should already have counts of library use and

may be keeping statistics. He also recommended Victor request statistics of reference requests including people coming in to the library and phone requests. Victor referenced the RSA regarding libraries but feels the requirements of the RSA created in 1963 are outdated as there are now more ways to access information without going to the library that did not exist at that time. He would like to know what percentage of the population uses the library as the library is a large cost to taxpayers. Brandy noted Library Director Sarah Chapman brings statistics to the Finance Committee and this is public information that anyone can request at the library. The current information may be available as the Library will meet with the Finance Committee again soon. Joe also suggested Victor contact NH State Library Chief Mike York. Victor gave the request in writing to Peter. Peter said he is not sure if the Selectmen have the status to make this request according to the legal status of the library discussed earlier. Joe recommended Victor submit the request to the Library Trustees.

School Board Member Bill Schmidt was present and asked if the statement above that the school would be asked to include sand and salt in its budget has been mentioned to School District officials. Peter said he spoke to School Board Chairman Wendy Lambert about this today and the town agreed to continue plowing the school parking lot until June 30, 2016. The SAU Superintendent is researching school plowing costs for FY 17 but he is also planning to include it in the FY 16 budget in case the town requires it. Bill said that as a taxpayer it doesn't matter if the school or town taxes pay for the school parking lot plowing, he has never had a problem with the condition of town road plowing. Brandy recommended all parties involved in this issue participate in a meeting to discuss it. She does not expect this issue to be resolved at the Finance Committee and doesn't think that is the appropriate place for this discussion or decision. Joe noted several conversations have taken place with the Superintendent on this issue and he expects it will be resolved soon. Brandy said it should be resolved with the NBCS Principal not the SAU Superintendent. Peter noted the Road Agent has to plan his budget based on what happens in the next six months. An update will occur at the next Selectmen's meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10PM, seconded by Dwight. All were in favor. 2-0

Prepared by Maralyn Segien

Adopted-November 2, 2015
Selectmen's meeting